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| APPLICATION NO.   | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/871,335  | 05/31/2001  | Douglas B. Quine     | F-182               | 9597             |
| 919   | 7590        | 12/01/2006           | EXAMINER            |                  |
| PITNEY BOWES INC.<br>35 WATERVIEW DRIVE<br>P.O. BOX 3000<br>MSC 26-22<br>SHELTON, CT 06484-8000 |             |                      | NELSON, FREDA ANN   |                  |
|   |             |                      | ART UNIT            | PAPER NUMBER     |
|   |             |                      | 3628                |                  |

DATE MAILED: 12/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/871,335

Applicant(s)

QUINE, DOUGLAS B.

Examiner

Freda A. Nelson

Art Unit

3628

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 July 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 14-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 14-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

The amendment received on July 10, 2006 is acknowledged and entered. Claims 1-12 and 14-28 are currently pending.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments, see Remarks/Arguments filed July 10, 2006, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1, 8, and 16 under 35 USC 103(a) have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of McMahan (US Patent Number 6,717,169).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claims 1-12 and 14-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter, (US Patent No: 5,243,654), in view of McMahan (US Patent Number 6,717,169).

As Per Claim 1, Hunter discloses a mail processing system, comprising:

a processor system receiving said system data and generating feedback signals, [fig 4, 202, 220]; processor, meter]; and [col. 6, lines 63-65}, sensors connected to meter] and [col.6, lines 58-59; processor connected to receive data] and a communication system for communicating said feedback signals to at least one of a local user and a remote user, [col. 4, lines 35-40}, represents exchange of data between data center].

Hunter does not explicitly mention the disclosure of having a "plurality of sensors".

However McMahan discloses that for example, in paper or sheet article processing, such as mail processing, machines such as, for example, inserters, turnover sequencers, accumulators, folders, and collectors include optical sensors that monitor the flow of sheet articles through the machines (col. 1, lines 11-19).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Hunter to include the feature or Hunter to include the feature of McMahan in order to provide added security by having several sensors.

As Per Claim 2, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said processor system further comprises, [fig 7, 326}; processor]:

a database for storing predetermined sets of system data, [col.2, lines 65-67}, mechanism for storing information]; aid a comparator for comparing the System data

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received from said sensors with the predetermined sets of system data to generate feedback signals, [fig 5B, 268]; compare with current readings],

As Per Claim 3, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said communication system is a wireline communication system, [col. 11, lines 53-64], communication by dedicated line].

As Per Claim 4, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said communication system is a wireless communication system, [col. 11, lines 53-64], communication by dedicated line].

As Per Claim 5, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said system data are selected from the group consisting of preventative maintenance schedules, and performance statistics, [fig 2, and col. 4, lines 42-43]; software routine that controls the operation of meter].

As Per Claim 6, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein the system data stored in said processor system is variable, [fig i, 22, 28]; processor, non-volatile memory].

As Per Claim 7, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said feedback signals include improvement recommendations, [{col. 8, lines 18-21}; call data center, receive data, determine if valid, error message is displayed].

As Per Claim 8 and 16, Hunter discloses a mail processing system, comprising:  
a computer system, [{fig 7, 320}; computer] the receiving said, said computer system further comprising, [{fig 1, 42}; customer database];

a database system for storing predetermined sets of data respectively, [{fig 1, 42}; database]; and

a communication system coupled to said computer system for communicating the feedback signals to at least one of a remote user and a local user, [{col.4, lines 35-40}, represents exchange of data between data center].

Hunter does not explicitly mention the disclosure of having a "plurality of sensors".

However McMahan discloses that for example, in paper or sheet article processing, such as mail processing, machines such as, for example, inserters, turnover sequencers, accumulators, folders, and collectors include optical sensors that monitor the flow of sheet articles through the machines (col. 1, lines 11-19).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Hunter to include the feature or Hunter to include the feature of McMahan in order to provide added security by having several sensors.

As Per Claim 9, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said communication system is a wireline communication system, [{{col. 4, lines 35-40}}; represents exchange of data between data center].

As Per Claim 10, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said communication system is a wireless communication system, [{{fig 4}}, utility system in accordance with the invention].

As Per Claim 11, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said are selected from the group consisting of data related to preventative maintenance schedules, and performance statistics, [{{fig. 2; col. 4, lines 42-43}}; software routine that controls the operation of meter].

As Per Claim 12, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said data are selected from the group consisting of comprises data related to business rules, postal rates, and customer profiles, [{{fig 1, 42}}; customer database].

As Per Claim 14, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said feedback signals include improvement recommendations, [{{col. 8, lines 18-21}}; call data center, receive data, determine if valid, error message is displayed].

As Per Claim 15, Hunter further discloses the mail processing system wherein said feedback signals include cost savings information, [{col. 6, lines 65-67}; sensor provides to processor data information].

As Per Claim 17, Hunter further discloses the method wherein: the predetermined value is stored in a database system, [{col. 3, lines 3-4}; storage mechanism].

As Per Claim 18, Hunter further discloses the method of wherein said database system is located within said computer system, [{col. 4, lines 26-28}; data center includes computer connected to memory containing customer database].

As Per Claim 19, Hunter further discloses the method of wherein said database system is located remote from said computer system, [{col. 4, lines 26-28} data center includes computer connected to memory containing customer database].

As Per Claim 20, Hunter further discloses the method wherein said communication step is performed using a wireline communication system, [{col. 4, lines 35-40}; represents exchange of data between data center].



As Per Claim 21, Hunter further discloses the method wherein said communication step is performed using a wireless communication system, [{{coi.4, lines 35-40}}; represents exchange of data between data center].

As Per Claim 22, Hunter further discloses the method of: wherein said parameter is related to mail objects processed by said mail processing system, [{{fig 5A}}, controls the meter system, review description];

As Per Claim 23, Hunter further discloses the apparatus wherein the parameter is selected from the group consisting of preventative maintenance schedules, and performance statistics, [{{fig 2; col. 4, lines 42-43}}; software routine that controls the operation of meter].

As Per Claim 24, Hunter further discloses the method wherein the parameter is selected from the group consisting of business rules, postal rates, and customer profiles, [{{fig 1, 42}}; customer database].

As Per Claim 25, Hunter further discloses the method wherein: said predetermined value is selected from the group consisting of predetermined mail processing system values and predetermined mail object values, [{{fig 6, 300, 304}}; review and verify I.D. information, update records].

As Per Claim 26, Hunter further discloses the method of claim 25, further comprises: varying said predetermined values, [{col.3, lines 3-4}; storage mechanism].

As Per Claim 27, Hunter further discloses the method wherein said feedback signals include improvement recommendations, [{col.8, lines 18-21}; call data center, receive data, determine if valid, error message is displayed].

As Per Claim 28, Hunter further discloses the method wherein said feedback signals include cost savings information, [{col.6, lines 65-67}; sensor provides to processor data information].

### ***Conclusion***

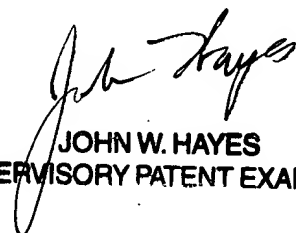
Examiners note: Examiner has cited particular columns and" line number in the response for the convenience of the applicants. It respectfully requested from the applicant, in preparing the response, to fully consider the reference in its entirety as a potentially teaching reference.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Freda A. Nelson whose telephone number is (571) 272-7076. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

FAN 11/27/06



**JOHN W. HAYES**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**